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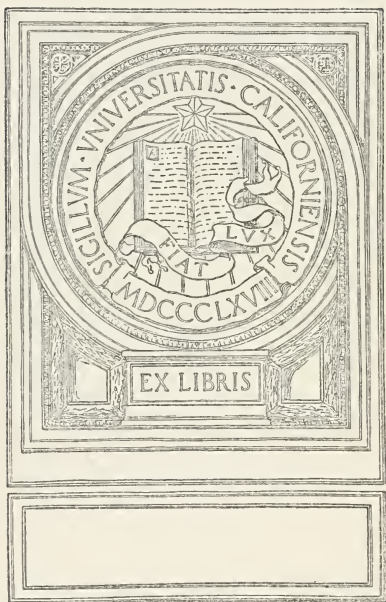
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# *Verses*

*Charlotte Whitcomb*



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Charlotte Whitcomb

# VERSES

By

CHARLOTTE WHITCOMB

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BOSTON  
RICHARD G. BADGER

The Gorham Press

1907

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*To My Beloved  
Here and Beyond*

*Excepting the song "Minnesota" every poem in this volume has appeared in the periodical press. The author desires to thank editors of the Youth's Companion, Munsey's, The Living Church, The Churchman, The Advance, Woman's Home Companion, etc., for permission to republish in this form.*

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*VERSES*



# MINNESOTA

## A SONG

Air: Araby's Daughter

O fair Minnesota! Thy river,—thy lover,—  
In ages gone by was the theme of romance,  
The quest of brave sailors who crossed the seas over,  
'Neath banners of Spain and the lilies of France.  
The great river called, in old days of tradition,  
De Soto, La Salle,—names we cannot forget,—  
It hailed Allouëz in his lone island mission,  
Gave Hennepin welcome and beckoned Marquette.

Then sing for the river, the mystical river,  
The river of rivers that welcomed Marquette.

O brave Minnesota! Those leaders forever  
Shall live in thy songs and on history's page,  
With captains and martyrs and knights of endeavor,  
Who won and bequeathed us our proud heritage.  
At camp fire and hearthstone full many a story  
Of ambush and battle-field shall be rehearsed,—  
How Colvill's unconquered found graves and found glory,

The first Minnesota! The glorious First!

Then cheers for our heroes, and tears for our heroes,

And love for our heroes, the glorious First!

O proud Minnesota! Thy smiling savannas  
Are grain fleets at anchor with pennons unfurled,  
Thy reverent pines to thy mines sing hosannas,  
Thy mills are all humming, "We've bread for the world."

Thy lakes, legend haunted, thy messenger waters,  
Thy white-breasted falls with their feet in the foam,  
Are dear to the hearts of the sons and the daughters  
Who, native or alien, all hail thee as home.

O fair Minnesota! O brave Minnesota!

My own Minnesota! My beautiful home!

## THE OLD YEAR

Old Father Time came down last night  
And found the dying year,  
And took him gently in his arms,  
And laid him on his bier.

And, one by one, the mourning hours,  
Stole out with sob or sigh,  
And each one as she passed along,  
Bade the old year good-bye.

And when cold, black-browed midnight came,  
And tolled the passing bell,  
The hero softly breathed his last,  
Farewell, old friend, farewell!

Then out beneath the watching stars,  
While requiem winds made moan,  
The mystic cortege swept away  
Into the vast unknown.



## WHAT I WOULD BE

What would I be if I could ?

Let me consider a minute—  
Something so that the old world would  
Be better for my being in it.

Then, what would I be if I could ?

O, laugh a, a lily, a linnet,—  
Anything so that the sad world should  
Be brighter for my being in it.

But what would I be if I could ?

This, (and I hope to win it,—)  
A happy-hearted woman,  
Wholesome and sane and human  
And loving, so that my own world would  
Be glad because I was in it.

## A NEW YEAR'S JINGLE

Of all the happy holidays,  
The days of mirth and cheer,  
The bravest in the calandar  
Is the first day of the year;  
The first day of the year, dear friends,  
We bid old sins adieu,  
And we tear off, and declare off,  
And begin all over new.

'Tis New Year's finds the gaffer young  
And makes the gammer gay—  
You know the saw concerning Jack,  
With all work and no play?  
With all work, and no play dear friends,  
We'll be but dullards, too,  
So put away all care today  
And begin the world anew.

The mistletoe is hanging yet  
Unwithered on the wall,—  
The Christmas tree is waiting yet,  
For Epiphany to fall,—  
For the dear Twelfth Night to fall, friends,  
And sandwiched 'twixt the two,  
With ringing chime comes New Year time  
When we start again, anew.

Then put away with yesterday  
The ghosts of care and woe,  
And haste to kiss the maiden, Joy,  
Beneath the mistletoe,—  
Beneath the mistletoe, dear friends,  
Are Joy and Goodness, too,  
When we tear off and declare off,  
And begin all things anew.

But the highest, holiest holiday  
Is kept alone—apart,—  
A secret anniversary  
Known only to the heart,—  
Known only to the heart, dear friends,  
When we bid old sins adieu,  
When we tear off and declare off,  
And begin all over, new.

## A NEW YEAR SONG

Old time has dropped from out his hand  
Six thousand New Year's days,  
Since the creation morning song  
First woke the strain of praise.  
The major and the minor chords  
Have blended all the years  
Thank God for more of glad than sad,  
For more of smiles than tears.

Thank God, that on this New Year's day,  
Our times are in his hand,  
And better things he has for us  
Than we can understand.  
The prophet-bards have long foretold  
A golden time to come,  
The brotherhood of man to be,  
The great millennium.

A thousand years! O, golden age!  
When woe and want shall cease,  
When over all the happy world  
Shall brood, dove-like, God's peace.  
Ring out! Ring out! O happy bells!  
All woe and want and tears;  
The golden age, it waits for us;—  
Ring loud her glad "New Years."

## MEMORIAL DAY, 1899

To note of bugle, beat of drum,  
With measured step and slow,  
Up the long village street they come,  
And to the graveyard go.  
Into the yard of graves they go,  
Our veterans scarred and gray,  
To pay the tribute comrades owe  
On each memorial day.

But while they place the dear heartsease,  
And hear the bugles play,  
The thoughts of each are over seas,  
O, many a league away.  
They hear the bullets hiss and sing,  
They hear the answering guns;  
O God, it is a fearful thing  
For sires to lose their sons.

Reach down, dear Lord, Thy gracious hand,  
And save, if it may be,  
From harm our soldiers on the land,  
Our sailors on the sea.  
For all our heroes, love and tears,  
Glory to them for aye;  
Honor shall name them down the years  
On each memorial day.

TO M. B. P.

I canna' halfway compliment  
The bonny books ye kindly sent,  
Nor fitly speak my praises,—  
The kerchiefs, too, so sheer and fine,  
All 'broidered round wi' natty vine,  
The corners decked wi' daisies.

The books are guid, the linen fair;—  
The first, I'll con, the second wear,  
Nor e'er forget the giver;—  
O winsome, cheery, happy elf,  
I lo' ye for your sonsie self  
An' may ye live forever.

Or syne sic' wish is idle breath,  
This is my prayer,—that, after death,  
Beyond the grave's dark portals,  
We twa, a pair o' blithesome ghosts,  
May wander 'mang the heavenly hosts  
The cantiest o' immortals,

## THE WAR STORY OF THE YEARS

Our men-folk donned the gray or blue  
And seized the army gun,  
And formed in ranks of two and two  
In 1861.

On many a field they fought and won,  
Or strove as strong men strive,  
But welcomed peace when war was done  
In 1865.

From plain to sea, from sea to plain,  
Clear fell the call of fate  
To crush the power of haughty Spain,  
In 1898.

New notes of peace from isles of palm  
Ring out to hills of pine,—  
Thank God to storm succeeds a calm,—  
In '1899.

Now let us pray that in the earth  
Grim war shall cease to be;  
May peace once promised with Christ's birth  
Mark the new century,  
In 1901.

## MEMORIAL DAY, 1901

Disconsolate she comes, a pallid, sabled mourner,  
Remembering her heroes with reverence laid  
away;—

So recently our guest, how gentle a sojourner!  
Who had changed her weeds for draperies of  
violet and gray.

Still for the discomfited remaineth consolation,  
Since, unstained, amid the crape float the white  
and crimson bars,

And for this, that North and South, a reunited  
nation,

May see upon our flag's blue field, new risen  
silver stars.



## NOVEMBER

O the meadow is brown, and the sky is gray,  
And the river runs dark to the sea,  
And the song and gladness of yesterday  
Today are not for me.  
When the year grows old  
The world is cold,  
And cold runs the stream to the sea,  
And love and its lay  
Were of yesterday,  
But today are not for me.

Mourn not, sad heart, for that yester bright,  
Nor grieve over present ill;  
Tomorrow will surely follow tonight  
And bring God's peace, if He will.  
There was never a day  
So cold and gray,  
But morrow and gladness knew,  
Nor a human fate,  
E'er so desolate  
But waked to happiness too.

## THE MINISTRY OF THE TREES

Into the woods with my lads I went,  
(The month it was April and well nigh spent.)

Into the woods when the buds were green,  
And like monks in cowls the ferns were seen.

"This tree shall be mine," so one lad spoke,  
And clasped with his arms a sturdy oak.

The other lad spied a statelypine  
"See mother," he cried, "this tree shall be mine."

The oak and the pine our roof trees stood,  
For we reared our home in the good greenwood.

How long is it since? The years are flown,  
My lads are men and I am alone.

Said one at parting, "If night seem long,  
O Mother, be cheered by our pine tree's song."

“ And glad,” says the other, “ each day shall be,  
With messages brought by our brave oak tree.”

So out I fare when the sun is high  
And the wind from the sea goes wondering by;—

And the oak leaves whisper of camp and fight,  
And my soldier's deeds in the cause of right.

The dark night through in trust I bide  
For always the pine-tree chants outside;

Never of wreck or storm of steel,  
But ever of peace and my sailor's weal.

If my lads come soon or the time be long,  
My courage is high and my faith is strong;

For whispering oak and pine-tree tell  
God careth for us and all shall be well.

## A NEW YEAR'S BALLAD

She sat by the window on New Year's Eve,  
A fair little maid was she;  
The new moon shone on her wistful face,  
As full on her face as could be.  
Then the little maid said, as she gazed at the moon:  
(A fair little maid was she)  
"O, moon so light, O, moon so bright,  
Grant me the wish I wish tonight."

She wishèd once and she wishèd twice,  
Full three times wishèd she:—  
"O, New Year moon, O, true year moon,  
My sweetheart show unto me;—  
The cut of his hair and what he shall wear,  
This night reveal to me.  
Moon so light, moon so bright,  
Grant me the wish I wish tonight."

A youth was loitering back of the hedge,  
(A mischievous lover was he)  
He crept along to her window ledge,  
Popping up as quick as could be.  
The cut of her hair, and what she doth wear,  
"This night reveal to me," said he,  
Moon so light, moon so bright,  
"Grant me the wish I wish tonight."

His face shut out the low new moon—

“ Your wish has come, do you see ?

Now name your lover my own sweetheart,”

“ He’s the man in the moon,” said she.

“ My sweetheart’s the man in the moon above,

But you’re all the moon I can see.

O, moon so light, O, moon so bright,

You’ve granted the wishes we wished tonight.”

## WHY NOT?

If I were free, dear bird, like you,  
Quite free, like you, to go or stay,  
Oh, well I know what I would do  
Today.

I'd leave the prison I have known,  
The city cells of brick and stone,  
And be a cheerful hermitess;—  
My hermitage the wilderness,  
And sing to heaven the whole day through,  
A comrade, little bird like you.  
*" Oh, self immured why not be free?  
Unlock your door and come with me."*

If I, like you, oh, breeze, were free,  
And need not work but might just play,  
I'd see the world I long to see  
Today.

Far from the marts of striving men,  
In by-ways sweet beyond their ken,  
I'd follow where the swallow dips,  
I'd skim the waves beside the ships,  
And be, bright breeze, the whole day through,  
A happy vagabond like you.  
*" Oh, timid soul! Why not be free?  
The door is open, come with me."*

## “ UNKNOWN ”

1862—19—

She stood, that immemorial day.

Within the shelter of his arm,  
Grief-bowed, and heard him, rev'rent, say—  
“ God keep my little girl from harm!”  
And then his column marched away.

He fell with broken blade in hand,  
Upon his heart her pictured face;  
His generous foes could understand,—  
They left his treasure in its place;  
They answered thus his eyes command.

He lies within a grave unknown,  
Somewhere beneath the Southern stars;  
She sits with whitened hair, alone;  
His wounds were death,—her's show no scars,—  
And all the burdened years have flown.

The lengthening years have gently flown,—  
“ God keeps her ” in his own right hand,  
She says, “ Fame sometime finds its own,—  
Some men are great, my love was grand!  
Can such as he be left unknown ? ”

With happy eyes she sits alone,  
This latest of Memorial Days;  
Outside, the march, the thundertone  
Of cannon,—music, garlands, bays!  
She smiles, “ My love comes to his own—  
“ Only his grave is left Unknown. ”

## THE OLD CHIEF'S PRAYER

With downcast face and covered head,  
An aged chief crouched in the aisle;  
He listened while the prayers were said,  
Nor moved, nor gave response the while,  
The service done, he drew away  
The blanket from his snow-white hair,  
And, standing, said, "I, too, would pray,—  
Old Broken Wing would speak this prayer."

"O, White Man's God, who must be great,  
Greater than storm, or sea, or sun,  
Because the white man is so great—  
The onward, never-stopping one.  
Before him, we are feeble grown;  
Forgotten soon our braves shall lie,  
Their deeds unsung, their names unknown—  
Waves, only, which have once run by.



“ The hours are dark from set of sun,  
The earth is lonely, too, and cold;  
We linger on, nor shout, nor run;  
Our babes are sad, our young men old.  
O, White Man’s God so great art Thou,  
No mercy canst Thou know, but yet,  
Teach dying men the neck to bow  
And make Old Broken Wing forget.”

He ceased,—the evening shadows gray  
Hid wigwam, settlement, and plain,  
As forth he fared; and since that day  
He never has been seen again.  
When wakened waves flow voiceful by,  
Or loud, ’mid pines, the wind harps ring,  
The Indian children gravely cry,  
“ He prays again—Old Broken Wing.”  
“ Hark! hear the prayer of Broken Wing.”

## HER STORY

A winsome herb, contented just to grow,  
Grew brave and true within a wilderness;  
Day fell upon her like a soft caress;  
She saw the dawns and twilights come and go,  
And star-set night. Life was all good, and so  
She yielded fragrance, as pure souls confess  
In wordless prayer the heart's deep tenderness,  
When lo! a mower came that way to mow.

For her delight, recurrent flashed the blade,  
For her, in measured music, dropt the grass,—  
“ Shall I have meat and fail to render grace ? ”  
She said, and fell not only unafraid  
But full of joy that so her life could pass;—  
Now, dead, her soul of sweetness fills the place.

## GOING HOME

I know a mansion fair and grand  
Where scented fountains play,  
And far and wide on either hand  
Brave acres stretch away.  
The owner hears with smiling face  
Its praise from all who come,  
But inly says,—“ A stopping place,—  
Some day I'm going home.”

Upon a hillside far away,  
Fanned by the mountain breeze,  
His “home” still stands, moss-grown and gray  
Beneath its patriarch trees.  
And he, now old, with furrowed face,  
(They need God's grace who roam)  
Still patient sighs—“ A stopping place,  
Some day I'm going home.”

## PICTURES

Out from the studio window  
Of a painter's home today,  
I saw a yoke of oxen  
Drawing a load of hay,—  
A yoke of wide-horned oxen,  
Drawing a load of hay.

The silken throng around me  
Were lost in a mist of tears,  
And back I sped to childhood  
Over the bridge of years;—  
Sped back to scenes of childhood  
Over the bridge of years.

Oh, the glory of the morning  
With the air like balmy June,  
And the tireless brooklet singing  
Its unforgotten tune,—  
The mountain wind and the brooklet  
Crooning the same old tune.

Where timothy and clover  
Swayed in the breezes blithe,  
I listened to the mower  
Whetting his shining scythe,—  
The tanned and bare-armed mower,  
Whetting his shining scythe.

I saw the sinewy farmer  
Spreading the heavy swath,  
While the new hay lay in windrows,  
Like strips of burnished cloth,—  
The fragrant hay in windrows,  
Unrolled like webs of cloth.

I saw the apple orchard,  
The field of tasselled corn,  
And heard the merry echoes  
Repeat the dinner horn,—  
Heard all the hillside echoes  
Repeat the dinner horn.

Balancing on a weed stalk,  
Loud sang the bobolink,  
While from the brimming pitcher,  
The mowers stopped to drink,—  
From the cool and brimming pitcher  
I saw the mowers drink.

And then, from the upland pasture,  
O'er beds of brake and moss,  
I heard the barefoot farm-boy  
Calling, "Co' bos'! Co' bos'!"  
The little farm-boy calling,  
Co'bos'! Co'bos'! Co'bos'!"

Roused by the smiling artist's:  
"What more will you see today?"  
I say, "A yoke of oxen  
Drawing a load of hay,—  
My father's wide-horned oxen  
Bringing, at dusk, the hay."

## HIS FATHER'S SON

With furrowed face and toil-worn hands,  
She sat within her decent room,—  
She heard the music of the bands,  
She heard rejoicing cannon boom.  
“My son, a leader in the state!”  
She said, “What good thing have I done  
O God, who ruleth small and great,  
That Thou dost bless me in my son?”

### II

She closed her faded, happy eyes,—  
In fancy she was far away—  
Away where Norway's mountains rise,  
Where Norway's waters leap and play.  
In her tall son she saw again  
Her prattling comrade all day long  
Amid the fields of ripened grain,  
Where rang the reaper's harvest song.

### III

The reaper, ah! she could but grieve  
“He was my own good man,” said she,  
“It broke my heart his grave to leave  
When the ship sailed with Jan and me.”

\* \* \* \* \*

Her task of years to pray, to plan,  
To eke by toil their scanty hoard,  
To make her boy as good a man  
As the sleeper by the Northland fjord.

#### IV

Roused by the cannon's thunderous boom,  
The pulsing music of the bands,  
She meets her son within her room  
Longing to clasp her eager hands,  
She thinks not of the burdened years,  
Her part in all that has been won,  
But murmurs, smiling through her tears,  
“ Thank God! he is his father's son—  
A strong, true man—his father's son.”

## LOVE'S UTMOST

The wholesome manna falls each day  
For you, dear heart, and you;  
Love feeds our souls, Love smooths our way,—  
What further need Love do ?  
Each sunrise sees our wants supplied,  
Each sunset finds us satisfied,  
Through wilderness, Love doth guide,  
What further can Love do ?

## COMFORTLESS

He wronged a loving heart and, dying, said,  
“ God pardons all,—I go released and shriven.”  
She, twice defrauded, mourns discomforted,  
Because he never cared to be by her forgiven.



## THE BABY'S STAR

I sat one summer evening  
    Within the open door,  
With my lisping, blue-eyed nephew  
    At play on the cool porch floor.  
We watched the gold of the sunset  
    Against the sky afar,  
Till it gathered into a brilliant  
    And shone—the evening star.

A patter of baby footsteps,  
    The music of baby talk,  
And his dress a snowy flutter  
    Adown the garden walk.  
“ Oh, pretty, pretty for Auntie!”  
    He had gone in quest of the star—  
Thus innocent and loving,  
    God's blessed angels are.

I could not follow the rover,  
    I was helpless from years of pain,  
But I said, “ My darling loves me;  
    When I call, he will come again.”  
His steps grew faint and fainter.  
    The evening air grew chill,  
“ Come dear!” I called, “ Come Baby!”  
    And listened—but all was still.

I called till the dusk had deepened,  
    I was faint with doubt and dread,  
When I heard his flying footsteps  
    And my soul was comforted.

His face was like one transfigured,  
And in his violet eyes  
Was a look not born of terror,  
Or pain, but of awed surprise.

“ Oh, where,” I said, “was my baby?  
And what did Harry see?”  
“ I ’sink ’twas a big, big naughty—  
But Auntie’ll keep care o’ me!”  
I gathered the little one to me,  
And pillowed his head on my breast,  
And crooned a lullaby softly,  
Till his white lids closed in rest.

He could not tell what appalled him;  
Perhaps ’twas the coming dark;  
Perhaps but a cricket’s chirping,  
Or, maybe, a firefly’s spark.  
“ But,” I sighed, “it must be so always,  
His star he will never meet,  
For fear, or sin, or sorrow,  
Will hinder his climbing feet.

“ The world is wide and evil,  
And ever till life be flown,  
Mid pitfalls of darkness and danger,  
My dear one must go alone.”  
“ Auntie’ll keep care o’ baby!”  
Lispd the little one in his sleep,  
Then I thought of the Heavenly Shepherd,  
And his promise to guide and to keep.

And "surely he will deliver,"  
I thought, with a grateful sense,  
"Us both from the snare of the fowler,  
And the noisome pestilence.  
He will cover us with His feathers,  
And under His wings shall we trust;  
His truth is our shield and buckler,  
He remembereth we are dust."

Then I held my nestling closer  
And smiled at my poor alarms,  
For I felt the strong uplifting  
Of the Everlasting Arms.  
And thus the baby brought me,  
Not the star that had been his quest,  
But a star of faith, abiding,  
To be my radiant guest.

## A TRIBUTE

Lone Mansfield! Monarch of the Hills! snow  
crowned,  
A sentinel on his own majesty,  
Stands silent, dark and stern;—clustering round,  
The hills, his green-robed vassals stand; in glee  
They toss their leafy plumes, but never he,  
Their king and guard, his tireless watch suspends;  
He looks from domes of Montreal to see  
The blue of Adirondack peaks, or bends  
To gaze on Camel's Hump, or where the Granite  
range extends.

Ah! well I love thee, mountain land! My home!  
Sweet voiced Winooski and the smooth Lamoille  
Are dear to me, and pleasant memories come  
Of bright Champlain and blue Lake George; the  
soil

Where sweet arbutus loves to trail its spoil;  
Where falls the nut and hides the violet;  
The land of calm content and honest toil  
My childhood loved, I claim as mine; but yet,  
Though far away, those scenes I knew I may not  
soon forget.

## THE GLEN

I know a sanctuary glen  
That lieth far away;  
Its tenant pines respond, "Amen!"  
When strong winds plead or pray.

Within the glen a little pool  
Abideth still and lone,  
Constant and calm, content and cool,—  
A font by an altar stone.

Like Moslems all bowed low to pray  
Are the vines about its brink;  
In its unsunned depths are trout at play;  
At its margin wild birds drink.

Oh, far away is the lonely glen,  
As my youth is far away,  
But I'd give the world to be there again,  
To be there again today;—

I would lie and rest as a child rests when  
He is too tired to play;—  
I would rest as rest unconquered men  
At the close of a hard-fought day.

## THE RAIL FENCE

It roves the farm all over  
With awkward-stepping feet,  
Here, close beside the clover,  
There, just beyond the wheat.  
Along the fallow, fragrant,  
For woodland ways it makes,  
And many a sylvan vagrant  
As boon companion takes.

It loves the woodbine tangles,  
Invites the milkweed pod,—  
And all its sunny angles  
Laugh out in goldenrod.  
Beneath the creviced rider  
The cricket shrills close hid  
And from the stake beside her  
Complains the katydid.

The squirrel is its lover,  
And unafraid and fond  
Are bobolink and plover  
Of the genial vagabond.  
Of all around, above it,  
It has the confidence  
And man and nature love it—  
The homely old rail fence.

## IN MEMORIAM

Rev. 3: 12

I pause amid life's busy ways  
To drop a tear above her;  
I knew her well in other days,  
And knew her but to love her.  
What matters now, or praise or blame,  
Upon her brow is God's New Name.

He taketh first, He loveth best,  
We know in love He gave her;  
In love He called her into rest,  
In wisdom called to save her,  
Perchance from sorrow, want or shame,  
And now she beareth God's New Name.

"He giveth His beloved sleep;"  
Beyond the grave's dark portal  
She'll waken never more to weep,  
And rise a bright Immortal.  
That better prize than earthly fame,  
We trust she'll bear,—'tis God's New Name.

O Jesus, gentle, crucified,  
Forgive our human sorrow;  
Teach us to look beyond life's tide  
Into that bright tomorrow,  
When thou shalt say, "These overcame,  
Upon their brows write My New Name.'

## TO HELEN

“ Goodness is beauty in its best estate; ”  
This gift is thine and since it must abide  
With thee alway, though good or ill betide,  
Thy life, dear friend, can ne’er be desolate,  
For blessings sweet and heaven-sent upon its days  
shall wait.

## FORGIVENESS

“ I do forgive, ” said one, “ I do, but go,  
’Tis best we walk apart, but go forgiven;— ”  
Ah, what were God’s forgiveness did He so  
Remit our sins and then deny us heaven ?



## MY LITTLE CLOCK

My little clock stands in its place  
And runs, with time, its daily race;  
    Its tick, tock, cheerful company,  
    Its smiling dial good to see,  
When fast the hands each other chase.

When wound, it stops,—unless a space  
Of time be spent upon its face;—  
    This done, runs true and merrily  
    My little clock.

Thus men, to keep a steadfast pace,  
Humbly, before the throne of grace,  
    Must daily go to strengthened be  
In faith, and helped in constancy.  
This lesson from thy ways I trace,  
    My little clock.

## THE CLOSED HOUSE

The dear old home, low gabled, wide,  
With broad wings spread on either side,  
Sits patient, like a mother bird,  
And dreams of all her walls have heard  
In days that with the past abide.

Her lovers, whom far seas divide  
From latch string and from ingleside,  
Revere and bless in thought and word  
The dear old home.

As nestlings, when the dusk doth chide,  
Haste, 'neath protecting love to bide,—  
So wanderers, with eyes tear-blurred,  
With hearts by homesick longings stirred,  
Will seek, at some glad eventide,  
The dear old home.

## HEARTSEASE

A little, tender flower  
With modest eye,  
Lived half its summer hour  
And drooped to die.

The neighboring grasses tall,  
Field daisies white  
And fern-banks by the wall,  
Shut out the light.

Green mosses, cool and deep,  
Drank all the dew:  
Tall poppies, half asleep,  
In sunshine grew.

The flower pondered long—  
“ I wonder why,  
When they are glad and strong,  
I faint and die ? ”

A gardener, wise and kind,  
Chanced then to come;—  
“ Lo! here heartsease I find,  
I'll have it home.

“ Come, winsome blossom blue,  
Make glad your face,  
I'll give you light and dew,  
You'll grow in grace.”

Our God is Lord of death  
And He is just  
And He remembereth  
That we are dust.

Tried heart, in patience rest,—  
His day will come;  
What time He knoweth best,  
He'll have thee home.

## ELECTRICITY

A sky-born genius, fettered, housed;  
The wonder-worker of the hour;  
And infant, calm,—a giant, roused—  
With heart of poet, hand of power.  
A slave who works, or fights, or sings,  
Or voices thought and gives it wings.

## FAITHLESS

A trembling star lay pale and far upon the sky at  
even,

A fiery comet blazed its way across the peaceful  
heaven:

“ The star!” I cried in agony of fear;

“ A helpless spark upon the monster’s path,

What power can save it from swift coming  
wrath?”

A moment more the meteor was gone

When lo! the little star, God-kept, shone on.

A single blossom graced the bush beside my cot-  
tage door;

Fresh, fair and pure, upon its breast a gem of dew  
it wore.

An angry gale swept down the mountain height:

The treasured flower was leveled by the blast,

But when the furious storm was overpast,

Unharméd, the flower upraised its blushing  
face,

Still bright with dew and sweet with added  
grace.

As fair as flower, as pure as star, was my loved  
friend to me,  
So near, so dear, my household star, my own  
hearth flower was she;  
But malice said, " You have a friend no more."  
Ah! then, indeed, I bowed my widowed head  
And ever sorrowed for that love was dead,—  
But, while my soul despaired, bright dawned  
the day,  
Beside me stood my friend and kissed my tears  
away.

### THEY COME NOT BACK

Who would resentment hold against the helpless  
dead?  
Those mute, defenceless ones God hath released  
and shriven?  
And yet, alas for us! we live disquieted  
Because they never can come back and be by us  
forgiven.

## TWO PROBELMS

### HIS

Now why does she say, " I don't know,"

Whenever I ask if she's going?

Beats my time why she treats a man so.

Now why does she say, " I don't know?"

Some one else must have asked her to go

And she'll do it, nor give me a showing.

Now why does she say, " I don't know,"

Whenever I ask if she's going?

### HERS

Why doesn't he ask, " Will you go?"

Instead of that horrid, " You going?"

Of course I must say, " I don't know."

Why doesn't he ask, " Will you go?"

The stupid! he vexes me so!

Then I go with some man not worth knowing.

Why doesn't he ask, " Will you go?"

Instead of that horrid, " You going?"

## HOW IT HAPPENED

She hadn't seen Joe  
    When she said she loved me;  
Was she fickle? O, no!  
But she hadn't seen Jo—

And fate willed it so—  
    As she hoped I would see;—  
She hadn't seen Joe  
    When she said she loved me.

## MISAPPREHENSION

When I ventured to ask her to wed,  
    I had misunderstood, she averred;  
Might she not be my sister instead?  
When I ventured to ask her to wed.  
But when I brought needles and thread,  
    Frayed ties and torn hose, she demurred.  
Like the day when I asked her to wed,  
    I had misunderstood, she averred.



## THE CHIMES AND THE STREET MINSTREL

“ ’Tis a brave old tune the big chimes ring,  
And they’re never too tired to play;  
But as for the words they say when they sing,  
They’re different every day.”

So thought the boy minstrel and tuned his guitar,—  
He was hungry and cold, but he said:

“ I will sing for the bells of the love of Christ,  
I’m too tired to sing for bread.”

It<sup>2</sup> was Christmas eve and the courthouse chimes  
Rang the quarter past the hour;  
“ One, two, three, four,” was the slow refrain  
Of the chanting bells in the tower.  
“ The Christ is born,” sang the boy below,  
And the strain insistent, sweet,  
Followed the happy care free throngs  
That threaded the crowded street.

But no one marked the little lad  
Or saw what the dark eyes plead,  
The lad who sang for love of Christ,  
When too tired to sing for bread.  
Again the clanging bells rang out  
The half-hour’s measured strain  
“ One, two, three, four; One, two, three, four;”  
Carolled the boy again:

“ The Christ is born in Bethlehem,”  
The words rang loud and sweet,  
And fireside groups grew still to hear  
The singer on the street.  
Another interval passed by—  
Loud pealed the bells and strong,  
And ever sweet and clear and high  
Echoed the singer’s song.

“ The Christ is born, in Bethlehem,  
Now peace on earth,” he sang,  
The stars shone bright, the moon rode high,  
And the Christmas joybells rang:  
The merry Christmas joybells rang,  
“ The Christ is born,” and then  
In clearer tones, “ Now peace on earth,  
Good will, Good will to men!”

They found him lying where he fell;  
He smiled, “ I cannot sing,  
But I think I’ll keep my Christmas  
Along o’ Christ, my King!”  
With Christ the King, with love and home.—  
Softly the joybells ring  
Of the sweetness of the love of Christ,  
And Christmas with the King.

## O HELP DIVINE!

Reach down strong hands  
Of gracious loving kindness,  
O help Divine!  
My Savior and my God!  
I grope my way,  
In weakness and in blindness,  
Turn to a staff of strength  
The chastening rod.

I fail—and fall,  
All hurt and torn and wounded,  
O Help Divine!  
My Savior and my God!  
I've borne so long,  
Let now thy love unbounded  
Turn to a healing wand  
The chastening rod.

“ It shall be yours,  
Whate'er ye ask believing:”  
Thy spoken words,  
My Savior and my God;  
Behold I come  
With soul bowed for receiving,  
To benediction turn  
The chastening rod.

## LIBERATED

*"concerning them \*\* sorrow not."*

— Thess., 4:13—

I know not whether 'twas palace or shed,  
But I dreamed the moon was round and bright;—  
A sheeted form lay low on a bed,  
And people I knew, or had known, said:  
"Alas, she is dead! Our friend is dead."  
Said one to another, "she died tonight."

They spoke of me. I replied, "I am here."  
The harvest moon shone full and bright,  
But they mournfully gazed at That on the bier,  
Nor heeded my words, nor my presence near,  
Nor my joyous smile, but said: "Poor dear—  
She is dead, alas! She died tonight."

I went among them and plead, "No, no!"—  
I knew them all, the moon shone bright—  
"That poor Deserted ye gaze at so  
Was prison, with fetters of pain and woe;  
But now I am free." Still, communing low,  
They said: "She is dead! She died tonight."

I wake to the dawn and the morning star;—  
The moon is away on her sails of light;  
I seem to have journeyed from far—so far!  
Is this life, to dwell where death's shadows are?  
Was that death, that step from blindness to sight?  
When next, kind angel, the gates you unbar,  
Let them say, "Free! free!" only "Free!" that  
night.

## THE CHRISTMAS STORY

The robed and sandaled prophet stood  
And prayed, 'neath Eastern skies,  
God to reveal some coming good  
To his dim and aging eyes.  
He spoke endowed with prophecy—  
“ Look ye! For war shall cease!  
The Wonderful! The Counselor!  
Shall come as Prince of Peace!”

The weary years rolled on apace,  
The prophet's tongue was stilled,  
But 'neath the blue Judean skies  
His vision was fulfilled,—  
What time the herald angels sang  
Of love that shall not cease,  
And reverent kings came bearing gifts  
To one, the Prince of Peace!

The kings, the shepherds and their flocks,  
The stall, the manger low,  
Have, like the prophet, now become  
A part of long ago:—  
But the prophet's words, the angels' sang  
Ring on, and shall not cease,  
For love on earth, good will to man  
Comes with the Prince of Peace!

## A CHRISTMAS HYMN

### I

All in the silent night,  
The silent, sacred night,  
The Holy Lord was born;  
And all was brought to light,  
To life and love and light,  
That ere was lost or lorn.

### II

Be thou a silent night,  
A still, adoring night,  
O my unquiet soul!  
Christ will be born in thee,  
And thou and I shall see  
The end of dour and dole.

### III

Despite its sin and strife,  
Father, of my poor life  
Another Bethlehem make,  
And have Thy place and part  
At once within my heart  
For Christ's adorèd sake.

## THE FIRST EASTER

I love to read the story  
Of the first great Easter Day,  
And of how in the early morning  
The stone was rolled away.  
I dare to think of the Master,  
In Joseph's rock-hewn tomb,  
Since the world of gentle nature  
Beguiled the hours of gloom.  
All night the rose of Sharon  
Exhaled her perfume sweet, . .  
While the nightingale sang softly  
At his beloved feet.  
There the lily-of-the-valley  
Rang her bells in her own dear way,  
While the breezes stopped to dally,  
Then on tiptoe stole away.  
The timid chirp of His sparrows,  
His ravens' plaintive cries,  
Made the dewy darkness voiceful  
And told of the dawn's surprise.  
And then in the morning early,  
While the world in twilight lay,  
The shining ones descended  
And rolled the stone away.  
At dawn came sorrowing Mary,  
In holy love and fear,  
And heard the heavenly message:  
"He is risen! He is not here!"  
So I dare to think of the garden  
And its days and nights of gloom,  
Since I know both earth and heaven  
Watched over the dear Lord's tomb.

## CHRISTUS RESURREXIT

Unto the tomb where my Master lay  
Early there came, on Easter day,  
Three women to whom a shining one said,  
“ Why seek ye the Living among the dead ? ”  
Hasted they then with this glad cheer,  
“ The Lord is risen! He is not here! ”

Forth from the tomb my Master had gone,  
No more with life's woes to be clothed upon;  
All in the past were His Nazareth,  
Gethsemane's sorrow and Calvary's death.  
The messenger angel spoke loud and clear,  
“ The Lord is risen! He is not here! ”

Master, my Master!—He came and He went,  
Bearing our sins and He died forspent,  
But over the cross these words are unfurled,  
“ I am with you, beloved, to the end of the  
world. ”  
Chorus the strain, angels and men!  
“ The Lord is risen! He lives again! ”

Then sing, sing the carols and ring the great bell,  
Away with the cypress and asphodel,—  
Bring snowy young lilies, bring roses, dew-wet,  
Bring violets, mary buds, bring mignonette.—  
With anthem and chant and resounding chime,  
His victory tell at this Easter time.  
Ring out! Sing out! again and again,  
The Lord is risen! Hosanna! Amen!



## AN EASTER CAROL

Sweet were the songs the young thrushes sung,  
Gaily the lilies their waxen bells rung,  
Larks from their grassy nests blithely upsprung,  
Ages ago, one morning.

Laughing, the waterfall leaped from the rill;  
The hoary old mountain-top called to the hill,  
“ Rejoice! and be glad, for our God hath His will!”  
On Easter Day in the morning.

“ The long night of darkness is over and done;  
Be glad, for, behold, the new day is begun!”  
Shouted the cedars of fair Lebanon,  
Ages ago, one morning.

Like bells lightly strung on the ribbon of time,  
The years of the centuries join in the chime;  
“ Rejoice! O, rejoice!” is the chorus sublime  
On Easter Day in the morning.

### “ WHILE IT WAS YET DARK ”

Through desolate hours of gloom  
Before the dawn of the day,  
In the Pilate-guarded tomb,  
Unfriended, the Master lay.  
It is not that faith forgets,  
Or that love no vigil keeps,  
But malice the night-watch sets,  
And the Master, unfriended, sleeps.

Unfriended ? 'Mid chant of the yew  
And psalm of prosessional pines,  
'Mid offertory of dew  
From the roses and eglantines ?  
While the lily He loved so well,  
That pure, little acolyte,  
Attended with censer and bell  
Throughout the mystical night ?

Did the whip-poor-will and the lark  
Forbear those hours to sing,  
And all the young ravens but hark—  
Perched near with folded wing ?  
Did the farthing sparrows make  
No chirp in the lonesome gloom ?  
Then were they mute for His dear sake,  
While He slept in the garden tomb.

Not all of God's infinite power,  
Not all His providence, lay  
In the glorious morning hour  
When He rolled the stone away.  
All sorrow His comforters heed,  
His angels all loneliness mark,  
His fatherhood answers our need  
And surrounds us while it is yet dark.

## AN EASTER HYMN

O, thou, Adored!  
Who once wast born,  
And cradled 'mong the lowly,  
And lived on earth  
With lost and lorn  
To help them to be holy.

Descend again  
Immortal Love!  
And make our hearts thy manger;—  
This Easter day  
O, Heavenly Dove!  
Come, not as once, a stranger.

Make our poor lives  
Thy Bethlehem,  
Our faith, a star of glory—  
Our worship, gold  
And frankincense  
And myrrh, as in the story.

While drifting down  
The dream of years,  
The angel's song of gladness  
Shall banish from  
The earth its fears,  
Its sin and wrong and sadness.

And all the way  
To Emmaus,  
Go with us, Loving Kindness,  
When evening falls  
Abide with us,  
And heal our doubt and blindness.

When morning dawns,  
Beyond the sleep  
Which bounds each mortal story,  
Receive us, then  
Fore'er to keep  
Our Eastertide in glory.











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